



## NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

### ***Request for Proposals RFP SOSVR2007-002***

### **Vendors to Provide Supplies, Equipment, and Services for Municipal Vital Records Preservation**

*August 1, 2006*

#### **Introduction**

The New Hampshire Department of State is requesting proposals from qualified vendors to provide archival supplies, equipment, and services for vital records storage and preservation in NH municipalities. Information on this vital records preservation grant program for city and town clerks is available on the Secretary of State web site ( [http://www.sos.nh.gov/VitalRecords/vital\\_records\\_pres\\_grants.html](http://www.sos.nh.gov/VitalRecords/vital_records_pres_grants.html) ).

Given the variety of goods and services required, it is anticipated that two or more applicants will be approved to be vendors, for a period of at least 12 months, under this statewide grant program for municipalities. Interested vendors are requested to submit information for those goods or services which they provide routinely as documented in catalogue or marketing materials. The application form (which can be downloaded as a Word template) includes quotes on fourteen selected items in order to establish cost comparisons between vendors, but the list is not meant to be all inclusive of the goods or services needed.

#### **Background**

The State of New Hampshire's Vital Records Improvement Fund (VRIF), created in 1991 and recodified in 2005, exists for the, "sole purpose . . . to provide revenues for the improvement of the registration, certification, preservation, and management of the state's vital records. . . . Moneys in the fund shall be allocated for software applications and development, preservation efforts, hardware, communications and technical support."<sup>1</sup> VRIF revenue is derived from a portion of the fees collected for copying and verifying vital records.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The VRIF, which is described in RSA 5-C:15, should not be confused with the New Hampshire local government records management improvement fund created in 2002 under RSA 5:47-51. The latter program has not, as yet, been funded. While municipal officials have a statutory responsibility to care for and preserve public records (as described in RSA 41:58-59, RSA 33-A, and Administrative Rules Mur 300), state support described in this document is confined by statute to vital records preservation and management.

<sup>2</sup> "Vital record," as defined in RSA 5-C:1, refers to a certificate or report of a (a) Birth, (b) Adoption, (c) Death, (d) Fetal death, (e) Marriage, (f) Divorce, (g) Legal separation, or (h) Civil annulment.

Most VRIF expenditures to date have been used for hardware acquisitions and software development and maintenance, including providing hardware and technical support to city and town clerks to support utilization and data entry in the NH Vital Records Information Network (NHVRIN). Funds are also being used by the NH Department of State Division of Vital Records to key in records data back to 1935 so that these can be included in NHVRIN and made available to municipalities electronically.

Some of the fund revenue has also been used to support vital records preservation at the municipal level, including 1996 assessments of vital record storage and preservation needs in 34 communities. In 1998, grants were awarded to five municipalities to help address critical vital records storage and preservation needs.

### **Assistance for Municipal Vital Records Preservation in FY 07**

A process is underway to expand support to city and town clerks for municipal vital records preservation in FY 07 (July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007). An administrator was hired in May 2006 to work with the city and town clerks, the Secretary of State (SOS), the Division of Vital Records administration, and the Vital Records Improvement Fund Advisory Committee (VRIFAC) to design and implement a program to distribute a portion of VRIF funds to NH municipalities to address vital records storage and preservation needs.

This assistance will be provided in four categories: (1) assessment and planning by qualified experts; (2) improvements to the records storage environment, records security, and related equipment; (3) rehousing, reformatting and conservation of vital records, including microfilming; and (4) special requests that fall outside the three other categories.

Every municipality is required to have a completed “category one” assessment of their vital records by an expert consultant *before* they can apply for assistance from categories two or three. A number of municipalities have completed prior records assessments, including those funded by the VRIF in 1996 and by Dartmouth College’s NH Local Records Education Project (NHLREP) in 1998, and it is anticipated that some of these “grandfathered” communities will proceed directly to a category two or three request.

### **Intent of this Request for Proposals**

This RFP is designed to approve vendors to ensure provision of a complete range of supplies, equipment, and services needed under categories two and three described above. It is not required or expected that every vendor be able to supply all items and services needed, and the SOS reserves the right to enter into agreements with multiple vendors, as appropriate, to meet the needs of municipalities and include a full range of archival supplies, equipment, and services.

In some cases, the SOS will provide funds directly to the cities and towns to purchase necessary supplies, equipment and services, but it is expected that, in most instances (especially the acquisition of the most commonly needed archival supplies, equipment, and services), that the SOS will facilitate/process the purchasing, and goods will be shipped directly from the vendor to the municipality. The SOS will pay the vendor for goods or services upon receipt of an invoice, subject to prior approval by the SOS grant program and verification that the municipality has received the agreed upon supplies, equipment, and services.

Applicants are asked to apply as vendors for ONLY those goods or services which they provide routinely as documented in a catalogue or other marketing materials; no subcontracting or partnership arrangements designed specifically to meet the terms of this RFP will be considered. It is understood that vendor applications may include only a single item among the fourteen sample items on the application form, and that no single vendor will have the capacity to respond to all fourteen sample items.

The volume of business for the selected vendor(s) cannot be precisely determined, but it is anticipated that a total of \$1,000,000 in grant funds will be awarded in FY 07. A significant percentage (perhaps 50% or more) of this total amount will be for purchase of supplies, equipment, and services. There is, however, no guarantee of any specified amount of business to any approved vendor.

### **Supplies, Equipment, and Services Needed**

Actual needs will be determined by the assessments, but most of the acquired supplies, equipment, and services are anticipated to be among the following:

#### **Category Two: Improving the Document Storage Environment**

- Equipment and supplies to monitor, and/or regulate temperature, humidity, mold, ultraviolet radiation, pollutants, insects, and/or dust including
  - hygrothermographs
  - data loggers
  - dehumidifiers
  - HEPA (high efficiency particulate air-filter) vacuum cleaners
- Smoke and flood alarms
- Metal shelving, compact shelving, or linear roll-out shelving to replace wooden shelves or other inadequate shelving
- Prefabricated modular vaults

#### **Category Three: Document Rehousing, Reformatting and Conservation**

- Archival storage boxes, file folders, and other archival storage supplies
- Conserving and rebinding vulnerable records
- Vital records reformatting

- Microfilming of documents
- Encapsulation of vulnerable documents
- Plastic boxes
- Purchase of equipment, such as a microfilm scanner and reader or edge platen photocopier attachments (i.e., Binder Minder™) to protect book bindings when photocopying.

### **Requirements of Applicants**

Supplies and equipment order entry and the ability to verify order status must be through a web-enabled function with a high level of security maintained through the use of passwords, etc.

Applicants must provide evidence of their ability to fill orders and/or provide services on a timely basis, consistent with good business practices.

No goods orders can be shipped, nor service work initiated, without written verification from the SOS that the municipality's application has been approved for funding. The amount of each order, as well as the statewide total, cannot exceed ceilings determined by the SOS and the VRIFAC.

Deliveries for supply and equipment orders must be f.o.b. the NH municipality requesting the order. Absolutely no delivery charges are to be added to an order unless documented in advance as part of the proposal process.

All items that are available from stock must be delivered within one week unless otherwise indicated at time of order entry. Completed packing slips in duplicate with back orders clearly indicated must accompany all shipments, with one copy provided to the SOS at the address below for payment.

Invoices must indicate SOS purchase order reference. Unless otherwise indicated in the proposal, it is assumed that payment terms are net 30 days.

Exchanges and/or replacements must be handled in a timely manner and include documentation of return and pending credit. An efficient process for credits must be in place. Vendor proposals should address this issue and explain the company's process.

For supplies and equipment, it is the SOS's intention to enter into an agreement in which the discounting structure is constant on all items in the vendor's catalogue, although differing discount rates for various categories of items will also be considered if clearly stated and explained in the proposal narrative.

A proposal to provide supplies and equipment must include a full catalogue with descriptive data of all available items, including brand names, specifications, and prices.

Samples of items may be requested after proposals have been reviewed. Do not furnish samples with your original submission.

Proposals for services should include documentation, such as a brochure or testimonies of past work, documenting experience and service quality.

The application form includes a sample of fourteen common goods and services for purposes of comparing bids; actual purchasing may or may not include these sample items and may include other items not listed here.

Pricing for all purchased supplies and equipment will be based upon discounted value from the catalogue price. Pricing must remain firm for one-year based upon the submission in the original application.

Assuming satisfactory service and timely delivery of quality products, approved vendors may be offered the opportunity to continue providing supplies, equipment, and services in future years. Price adjustments in future years will be subject to negotiation, and the SOS reserves the right to rebid all or selected items.

In submitting an application, the vendor agrees to all of the above terms unless expressly stated otherwise in the narrative proposal and agreed to in writing by the SOS. Vendors who do not have a State of NH vendor number will be required to apply for this status.

### **Application Process**

Interested parties should submit the following:

- (1) Narrative proposal including a statement of interest, any particular terms, especially those that differ from the norms set out in this document, and a statement of the discount percentage that will be applied for purchases
- (2) SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT: Catalogue and any other documentation (if needed) to include a complete listing of available archival equipment and supplies, including prices  
SERVICES: Description and documentation of services provided and references
- (3) Completed application form, including the price comparison chart for all items for which the vendor normally provides supplies, equipment, or services
- (4) Any other information that the applicant vendor would like to have considered.

Submit an electronic copy to: [douglass.teschner@sos.nh.gov](mailto:douglass.teschner@sos.nh.gov)  
and five paper copies, with all backup documents and catalogues, to:

Dr. Douglass Teschner  
Vital Records Preservation Grant Program  
Department of State  
Division of Archives and Records Management  
71 South Fruit St.  
Concord, NH 03301

Proposals must be received no later than 4:30 PM EST on Monday, August 21, 2006. Receipt of all applications will be acknowledged within ten working days. Notification of approval or disapproval will be made within sixty days of proposal receipt.

### **Evaluation of Proposals**

Proposals will be evaluated based upon general approach and compliance with the terms of the RFP (20%), established reputation as a vendor of archival supplies, equipment, and/or services (40%), and cost based on the sample item comparisons (40%). If necessary, supplemental or clarifying information will be requested.

### **Additional Information**

“Best practice” guidelines for record preservation (including recommendations for storage, paper record preservation, microfilming, and digital imaging) and links to various resources will be made available on the SOS web site.

The SOS will offer workshops on grant writing and vital records preservation for city and town clerks, and information on these will be posted on the SOS web site.

City and town clerks are encouraged to apply for additional record preservation funds to supplement or complement VRIF funding and address municipal record preservation needs designated in RSA 33-A that are not funded by the VRIF grant program. One such funding resource is the NH Moose plate program implemented by the NH State Library in the NH Department of Cultural Resources which provides grants up to \$10,000; this year’s application deadline is August 31, 2006, and information is available at [www.nh.gov/nhsl/moose.html](http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/moose.html).

The SOS will pursue other opportunities for records preservation funding to NH municipalities, including the possibility of federal funds through the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) of the National Archives and Records Administration.

Any questions about the Vital Records Preservation Grant Program may be addressed to Dr. Douglass Teschner at [douglass.teschner@sos.nh.gov](mailto:douglass.teschner@sos.nh.gov) or (603) 271-2236.